

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Previously amended) An imaging device comprising:

a substrate;

a photosensitive area within said substrate for accumulating photo-generated charge in said area;

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I } a photogate for controlling the accumulation of photo-generated charge in said photosensitive area;

a first and a second gate stack;

I a first insulating layer in contact with said substrate and beneath each of said first and second gate stacks; and

a nitrogen containing second insulating layer in contact with said substrate and beneath said photogate.

2. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 1, wherein said photogate includes a doped polysilicon deposited over said insulating layer.

3. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 1, wherein said photogate includes a transparent or semi-transparent conductor deposited over said insulating layer.

4. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 3, wherein said transparent or semi-transparent conductor is selected from the group consisting of indium-tin-oxide, tin oxide, indium oxide and doped hydrogenated amorphous silicon .

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 1, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a silicon nitride layer.

8. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 1, said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a nitrogen oxide containing layer.

9. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 8, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is ONO.

10. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 8, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is NO.

11. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 8, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is ON.

12. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 2, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a silicon nitride layer.

13. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 12, said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ONO layer.

14. (Previously amended) An imaging device including a semiconductor integrated circuit substrate, said imaging device comprising:

a photosensitive device, including a photogate overlying said substrate, for accumulating photo-generated charge in a photosensitive area of said substrate;

a readout circuit comprising at least an output transistor formed in said substrate;

a reset transistor for periodically resetting said node to a predetermined voltage; and

a nitrogen containing insulating material in contact with said substrate and beneath said photogate.

15. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 14, further comprising a charge transfer region for receiving charge from said photosensitive area having a control terminal, said transfer region being formed in said substrate adjacent said photosensitive area and having a node connected to a gate of said output transistor.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 15, further comprising at least one charge transfer device for transferring charge from said photosensitive area to said node in accordance with a control signal applied to said control terminal

19. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 14, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating material is a silicon nitride layer.

20. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 14, said nitrogen containing insulating material is a nitrogen oxide containing layer.

21. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 20, said nitrogen containing insulating material is an ONO layer.

22. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 20, said nitrogen containing insulating material is an NO layer.

23. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 20, said nitrogen containing insulating material is an ON layer.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 14, wherein said photogate includes a doped polysilicon deposited over said insulating layer.

26. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 14, wherein said photogate includes a transparent or semi-transparent conductor deposited over said insulating layer.

27. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 26, wherein said transparent or semi-transparent conductor is selected from the group consisting of indium-tin-oxide, tin oxide, indium oxide and doped hydrogenated amorphous silicon .

28. (Previously amended) An imaging system comprising:

a plurality of active pixel sensors arranged in an array of rows and columns, each active pixel sensor being operable to generate a voltage at a diffusion node corresponding to detected light intensity by the sensor;

a photogate formed over a charge collection area in a substrate in said pixel sensor, wherein a nitrogen containing insulating layer is in contact with said substrate and beneath said photogate;

a reset device to periodically reset the voltage of said diffusion node;

a row decoder having a plurality of control lines connected to the sensor array, each control line being connected to activate the sensors in a respective row; and

a plurality of output circuits, each output circuit being connected to the respective sensors in a column, operable to store voltage signals received from the sensors and to provide a sensor output signal.

29. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 28, further comprising a transfer transistor to transfer charge from said charge collection area to said diffusion node.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently amended) The imaging system according to claim 28, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a grown over said substrate layer.

32. (Currently amended) The imaging system according to claim 28, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a deposited over said substrate layer.

33. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 28, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a silicon nitride layer.

34. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 28, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a nitrogen oxide containing layer.

35. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 34, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ONO layer.

36. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 34, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an NO layer.

37. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 34, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ON layer.

38. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 33, wherein said silicon nitride insulating layer is a chemical vapor deposition deposited layer.

39. (Previously amended) An imaging system comprising:

a plurality of active pixel sensors arranged in an array of rows and columns, each active pixel sensor being operable to generate a voltage at a floating diffusion node corresponding to detected light intensity by the sensor;

a photogate formed over a charge collection area in a substrate in said pixel sensor, wherein a nitrogen containing insulating layer is in contact with said substrate and beneath said photogate;

a reset device to periodically reset the voltage of said diffusion node;

a row decoder having a plurality of control lines connected to the sensor array, each control line being connected to activate the sensors in a respective row; and

a plurality of output circuits, each output circuit being connected to the respective sensors in a column, operable to store voltage signals received from the sensors and to provide a sensor output signal.

40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently amended) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a grown over said substrate layer.

42. (Currently amended) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a deposited over said substrate layer.

43. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said photogate includes a doped polysilicon deposited over said insulating layer.

44. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said photogate includes a transparent or semi-transparent conductor deposited over said insulating layer.

45. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 44, wherein said transparent or semi-transparent conductor is selected from the group consisting of indium-tin-oxide, tin oxide, indium oxide and doped hydrogenated amorphous silicon .

46. (Original) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a silicon nitride layer.

47. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a nitrogen oxide containing layer.

48. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 47, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ONO layer.

49. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 47, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an NO layer.

50. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 47, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ON layer.

51. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 46, wherein said silicon nitride insulating layer is a chemical vapor deposition deposited layer.

52. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 48, wherein said ONO insulating layer is a chemical vapor deposition deposited layer.

53. (Previously amended) A system comprising:

(i) a processor for processing image data; and

(ii) a CMOS imaging device for providing image data to said processor and including:

a substrate;

a photosensitive area within said substrate for accumulating photo-generated charge in said area;

a photogate for controlling the accumulation of photo-generated charge in said photosensitive area; and

a nitrogen containing insulating layer in contact with said substrate and beneath said photogate.

54. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said photogate includes a doped polysilicon deposited over said insulating layer.

55. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said photogate includes a transparent or semi-transparent conductor deposited over said insulating layer.

56. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 55, wherein said transparent or semi-transparent conductor is selected from the group consisting of indium-tin-oxide, tin oxide, indium oxide and doped hydrogenated amorphous silicon .

57. (Currently amended) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a grown over said substrate layer.

58. (Currently amended) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a deposited over said substrate layer.

59. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a silicon nitride layer.

60. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 53, said nitrogen containing insulating layer is a nitrogen oxide containing layer.

61. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 60, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is ONO.

62. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 60, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is NO.

63. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 60, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is ON.

64. (Canceled)

65. (Original) The imaging device according to claim 53, said nitrogen containing insulating layer is an ONO layer.

66. (Previously amended) The system according to claim 53, wherein said system is a camera.

67 - 114. (Canceled)

115. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 1, wherein said nitrogen containing layer has been removed wherever it is not covered by said photogate.

116. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 14, wherein said nitrogen containing layer has been removed wherever it is not covered by said photogate.

117. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 28, wherein said nitrogen containing layer has been removed wherever it is not covered by said photogate.

118. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 39, wherein said nitrogen containing layer has been removed wherever it is not covered by said photogate.

119. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 53, wherein said nitrogen containing layer has been removed wherever it is not covered by said photogate.

120. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 1, wherein said first insulating layer is a layer of silicon dioxide.

121. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 14, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide which is over said substrate.

122. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 28, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide disposed over said substrate.

123. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 39, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide disposed over said substrate.

124. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 53, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide which is over said substrate.

125. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 115, wherein said first insulating layer is a layer of silicon dioxide.

126. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 116, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate and beneath said insulating layer, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide which is over said substrate.

127. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 117, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate and beneath said insulating layer, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide disposed over said substrate.

128. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 118, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate and beneath said insulating layer, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide disposed over said substrate.

129. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 119, further comprising a gate stack over said substrate and beneath said insulating layer, wherein said gate stack is disposed over an insulating layer of silicon dioxide which is over said substrate.

130. (Currently amended) The imaging device according to claim 120, wherein each of said photogate and said nitrogen containing second insulating layer is only partially disposed over each of said first ~~and second~~ gate ~~stacks~~ stack.

131. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 121 wherein each said photogate and said nitrogen containing insulating layer are only partially disposed over said gate stack.

132. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 122 wherein each said photogate and said nitrogen containing insulating layer are only partially disposed over said gate stack.

133. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 123 wherein each said photogate and said nitrogen containing insulating layer are only partially disposed over said gate stack.

134. (Previously added) The imaging device according to claim 124 wherein each said photogate and said nitrogen containing insulating layer are only partially disposed over said gate stack.

135. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 120, wherein said first gate stack is a transfer gate stack and said second gate stack is a reset gate stack.

136. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 121, wherein said gate stack comprises a transfer gate stack and a reset gate stack.

137. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 122, wherein said gate stack comprises a transfer gate stack and a reset gate stack.

138. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 123, wherein said gate stack comprises a transfer gate stack and a reset gate stack.

139. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 124, wherein said gate stack comprises a transfer gate stack and a reset gate stack.

140. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 135, wherein said nitrogen containing second insulating layer is disposed over a portion of said transfer gate stack.

141. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 136, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is disposed over a portion of said transfer gate stack.

142. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 137, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is disposed over a portion of said transfer gate stack.

143. (Previously amended) The imaging system according to claim 138, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is disposed over a portion of said transfer gate stack.

144. (Previously amended) The imaging device according to claim 139, wherein said nitrogen containing insulating layer is disposed over a portion of said transfer gate stack.

145 - 149. (Canceled)

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